

**LEARNING VISIT REPORT
SHARE Community 12056**

<p>1.1 Date of visit: 29/03/2016</p>	<p>1.2 Name of visiting Grants Officer: Jack Joslin Becky Green</p>	<p>1.3 People met with: Annie McDowall (CE) Robert Boyce (DepCE) Leanne Wood (HR) Joseph Vitton (Dev Off)</p>
<p>1.4 Programme Area and outcome: Making London More Inclusive\Disabled people actively taking part in the arts or sport</p>		
<p>1.5 Purpose of the award: £130,000 over three years (£43,000; £43,000; £44,000) towards the salaries of a p/t (17.5 hpw) Development Worker and 17.5 hpw of the HR Administrator, plus running costs of the "Go anywhere, do anything" Project.</p>		
<p>MONITORING INFORMATION</p>		
<p>2.1 Project Outcome 1: People with learning difficulties are more confident in accessing mainstream arts, sports and leisure events. They're able to manage social situations, navigate the transport system, and take part on an equal basis.</p> <p>Progress made: We met with project staff, management and 3 of the project beneficiaries in the organisation's new immersive learning space. The project has been very successful so far in recruiting and matching volunteers (social buddies) and beneficiaries for the 'Go anywhere, do anything' project. This year the project has worked with at least 48 people with learning disabilities, helping them to access a range of activities across London. Activities have included: music concerts; bowling; cinema trips; attending a festival; watching England at Wembley; and going to 'Kisstory' club night at the O2. The volunteers are matched to each beneficiary to enable them to access opportunities, navigate the transport system and engage in activities that they may not have been able to access in the past.</p>		
<p>2.2 Project Outcome 2: People with learning difficulties lead normal lives, enjoying what London has to offer at the same times and venues as everyone else, and with the lack of constraints such as getting home early.</p> <p>Progress made: From our discussion with staff it is clear that this project is enabling the beneficiaries to have a range of experiences and enjoy the full potential of what London has to offer. The beneficiaries are engaged throughout the planning of the project and they decide on what activities they would like to do at a monthly steering group. Two of the beneficiaries we met enjoyed their recent trip to a nightclub at the O2 where they got home at 3am. This project is finding ways to facilitate different experiences for its beneficiaries that they would not have been able to access in the past.</p>		

2.3 Project Outcome 3:

People with learning difficulties report feeling fitter and happier as a result of their activities on the project. Where appropriate, people's health can be demonstrated to have improved – e.g. those seeking to lose weight through exercise; people experiencing depression.

Progress made:

Following the meeting, we observed a steering group. The project workers used the immersive learning space as a tool to aid decision making. The space has been recently installed and is a special interactive room with wrap around video and sound. The use of this immersive learning space adds an extra dimension to the steering group meetings and how decisions are made. From observing the steering group in action and talking to the project members it was clear that this work is making a demonstrable difference to its beneficiaries. The project is improving the independence and choice of its members and increasing their engagement in activities.

2.4 Project Outcome 4:

People with learning difficulties are able to follow and develop their interests through buddy relationships with others who share their interest. As a result, they feel valued and benefit from companionship.

Progress made:

The project has 28 Social Buddies on its list of volunteers. Many of these volunteers have come through word of mouth as the project has developed. The Buddies are put through a rigorous training before they can sign up to support on an outing. They usually run one buddy to one beneficiary to ensure that a positive relationship is formed and the beneficiaries can share their interests. From talking to some of the members it was clear that these relationships and experiences were making a significant difference as well as helping to develop independence.

2.5 Project Outcome 5:

Evaluation of the project to promote best practice. The report will be disseminated and shared through the British Institute for Learning Disability and local forums.

Progress made:

The 2 project workers collect monitoring information throughout the year. This will be used in the external evaluation that will take place in the final year of the project.

GRANT OFFICER COMMENTS

Share Community works with disabled people who need extra help and support in order to achieve their potential. Share provides training and employment support for disabled adults, including those with learning disabilities, physical/ sensory impairments, autism and mental health needs. The project you have funded is making a real difference to its beneficiaries and through our conversations with staff, managers and project members it was clear how much added value this work was

offering. The project has been so sought after that they now have waiting lists and have already exceeded the number of beneficiaries they had originally forecast in their application. The project beneficiaries have complete freedom of choice and are involved in decision making at every stage. The staff act as facilitators and have a pro-active attitude to arranging outings. This project has opened London up to its beneficiaries and allowed them to attend a range of cultural, sporting and recreational activities that they may never have been able to access in the past. The use of social buddies has been enabling for the project and allowed the work to expand and thrive. From discussion with the project staff it was clear that the buddies gained as much from the project as the beneficiaries, which has in turn helped the organisation's profile in the local community.

The recent installation of the immersive learning space will add an extra dimension to this project, allowing staff and project members to make decisions at steering groups in an interactive and inclusive space.

It was clear from our visit that the project is delivering over and above its outcomes and it will be interesting to see what observations the external evaluation makes in the final year of your grant. During the meeting we discussed the sustainability of the programme and the organisation is looking at a variety of different options, including approaching corporates, the use of personal budgets and other avenues for funding. A Trust and Fundraising Officer is currently being recruited to assist with this.